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ABSTRACT

Religion has played a dominant role in the lives of people all over the world. It is a widespread and significant social force in human societies. This study examined the degree of religiosity among Muslims, Christians, and Hindus and its effects on dependency and self-esteem. Subjects (N=300) were college students divided evenly among each of the three religions and matched in age, sex, education, and socioeconomic status. A standardized religiosity scale and Rohner's Personality Assessment Questionnaire were used. Analysis of results showed that Muslims tended to have a higher degree of religiosity, followed by Christians, and with Hindus rating lowest on religiosity. Highly religious groups of Muslims and Hindus showed more dependency than their less religious counterparts. Self-esteem was lower among highly religious Hindus, while higher among Christians of high religiosity. Among Muslims, high and low religiosity groups did not reflect any significant differences. The high degree of religiosity among Muslims may be related to their minority status and feeling of insecurity as well as to the nature and the function of their religion combined with the dogmatism or rigidity with which they follow their religious pratices in routine life. (ABL)

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"DEPENDENCY AND SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO THE DEGREE OF RELIGIOSITY IN THREE RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN INDIA".

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A B S T R A C T

The present study aims at examining the degree of religiosity among Muslims, Christians and Hindus and its effects on dependency and self-esteem. The sample consisted of 100 subjects in each group, matched in age, sex, education and S.E.S., standardised religiosity scale and Rohner's Personality Assessment Questionnaire were used. Analysis of results showed that the Muslims tended to have higher degree of religiosity as compared to the Christians and Hindus, while Christians followed as second. Highly religious groups in Muslims and Hindus showed more dependency than their lower counterparts similarily self-esteem was seen poorer in highly religious Hindus, while higher in the Christians of high religiosity group. Among Muslims high and low religiosity did not seem to reflect any significant difference.

Introduction :

Religion has played a dominant role in the lives of people all over the world. It is a wide spread and significant social force in human societies. Religious principles and activities based on these may differ but religion itself exerted a magnetic and major influence on human life. Religious faith is manifested in emotional expressions and is ritualized by prayer, worship, singing, dancing, sacrifice, pilgrimage and similar other activities.

It is well known that the personal, domestic and social life of people is largely influenced by the doctrines of what they regard as their own religion. People have definite beliefs for which they stand and which have helped them to answer some of the great questions raised in every human mind regarding the mysteries of life. These beliefs turn into religious faith.

The term religiosity refers to religious faith Galloway (1914) defined it as "faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gain stability of life and which he expresses in acts of worship and service". Every man possess his own religious values and ideals, therefore the degree of religious faith may vary

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from individual to individual and community to community. As Allport pointed out the degree of religious faith ranges from high to low. Thus, one's degree of religiosity influences his behaviour and style of life in significant ways. It also offers a basis for social behaviour. It has been noted by many religious philosophers and psychologists that religion dispels mental unrest and plays a very vital role in shaping his mental setup and personality.

The study of religiosity or its correlates of personality has drawn the attention of social psychologists because it provides rich material to many key psychological proceses such as development and change of beliefs and attitudes, the arousal and reduction of anxiety and guilt, personality change and effect upon dimensions like dependency and self-esteem. The differences in religiosity among different religious groups are found by Broen (1957), Argyle (1958) Rokeach(1960), Lensk (1961), Foit (1962), Elkind and Elkind (1962). Pouryoussefi Hamid (1984) examined the religiosity of Muslim students and found that they were very high in their religiosity with regard to four dimensions (a) Belief (b) Ritual (c) Experiential (d) Consequential.

Tomka Niklos (1977) studied the degree of religiosity in 647, 13 to 30 yrs. Hungarian Ss and found all Ss religious by some criterion or another. Hassan and Khalique (1981) reported that the Muslims as compared to Hindus, tend to have a higher degree of religiosity similarly, Kureshi, Afzal and M Shafiq (1987) found significant difference in religiosity between Muslims and Hindus.

Hassan and Khalique (1981) reported significant positive correlations between religiosity and personality variables like anxiety, authoritarianism, regidity and intolerance of ambiguity. Similarly, Bhushan L.I. et al (1972) found that religiosity had a significant positive relationship with authoritarianism.

However, not many studies have been reported on personality correlates perticularly, dependency and self-esteem in relation to the degree of religiosity. Dunn (1965) described religious persons as more perfectionist, withdrawn, insecure and depressed than non-religious people.

Dreger (1952) and Ranck (1961) found that more orthodoxly religious persons are more submissive and dependent in interpersonal relations. Fisher (1964) reported a strong correlation

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between the Bass social acquiesence scale and three indices of religiosity viz. frequency of church attendance, self-rating of religiosity and the Allport verner religious scale. Burchinal (1957) observed a correlation between reported marital satisfaction and church attendance (reminiscent of billboard Slogan "Families that pray togather stay togather.") Kania (1965) found that theological students characteristically score high on the K scale of MMPI.

The Psychological research reflects correlations between religiosity and self-esteem also. Rosenberg (1962) has shown in a sample of high school students, that children reared in a dissonant religious context were some what more likely to have low self-esteem.

Hanawalt (1963) reported that religious belief was found to be only one of the threads running through the fabric of security feeling and self-esteem. Mckenna (1961) found a correlation among women who had attended a catholic college, between a measure of religious maturity and scales of the Guilford zimmerman selected as measuring self-objectification and self-extension. Prothro and Jensen (1950) showed that religiosity was significantly correlated with an index of low self-reliance. Similar findings were reported by Bonney(1949), Cowen (1954).

A review of the studies shows clearly that there have been very few studies available in this field, and whatever limited findings are available, they are not conclusive, rather contradictory to an extent. In the present study, therefore, an attempt has been made to find out the nature of relationship between religiosity and personality dimensions like dependency and self-esteem.

The main questions to which the present study addresses itself are (1) the communities Hindus, Muslims and Christians differ from each other with regard to the degree of religiosity (2) Whether the high and low religiosity groups in each community differ in their personality dispositions of dependency and self-esteem.

Sample :

The sample for the study consisted of 300 college students, 100 from each community (Hindu,Muslim and Christian). The sampling procedure may be called incidental because due to very small no of Muslims and Christians studing at the college level, no other sampling technique was possible.

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The subjects included in each religious group were of the same sex (male) and more or less equal in age, education and socio-economic status. Only undergraduates between 18 to 25 years of age were included. In the sample only boys were included due to lack of education among girls of Muslim community.

Tools :

Religiosity scale, a modified version of Dr.L.I.Bhushan's scale was used to measure religiosity and Adult Personality Assessment Questionnair known as PAQ originally developed and standardised by R.P.Rohaner and adoptated in Hindi by Dr. Jai Prakash was used to assess dependency and self-esteem.

Result :

In order to measure the degree of religiosity among the three religious groups Muslims, Christians and Hindus, the means and S.Ds of the religiosity scores in the three groups were calculated and critical ratio was used to find out the significant difference between the mean's. The values of means and SDs are given in the following talbe No.1.

Showing the mean values and S.D. of religiosity scores in three religious groups.

Groups	Mean	S D
Hindu	123.18	18.76
Muslim	137.93	18.76
Christian	130.49	15.06

Table No.1 :

To ascertain whether the difference in mean religiosity scores among the groups was statistically significant, critical ratios were calculated which are given below :-

Comparison groups	Critical ratio	Level of significance
Hindu x Muslim	- 5.56	.01
Hindu x Christian	3.04	.01
Muslim x Christian	3.09	.01

Table No.2

The above tables show that significant difference was found between the mean score (137.93) of Muslims and mean scores (130.49) of Christians, the C R values were found to be significant beyond .01 level of confidence. Similarly the difference between the mean score (130.49) of Christians and

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mean score (123.18) of Hindus were found to be significant beyond .01 level of confidence. The mean score (123.18) of Hindus and mean score (137.93) of Muslim were also found to be highly significant beyond .01 level of confidence. This clearly indicates that the Muslims have higher degree of religiosity, followed by the Christians.

The means and SDs of high and low religiosity groups with regard to dependency were calculated. "t" test was employed to find out significant difference between the two means. The results are summarised in the table below :

Groups		Mean	SD	df	't' ratio	level of significance
Muslims	High	19.931	4.933	52	1.839	.05
	Low	17.615	4.599			
Christians	High	22.863	4.845	45	0.606	Not Significant.
	Low	22.730	3.767			
Hindu	High	22.045	4.625	46	2.198	.05
	Low	19.407	3.704			

Table No.3.

Table No.3 showing 't' statistics for the comparison of dependency in high and low religiosity groups in the three communities. On a comparison of dependency means between high and low religiosity Muslim groups it was found that the difference was significant at .05 level of confidence. Similarly mean scores of high (22.045) and low (19.407) of Hindus were found to differ significantly at .05 level, but the mean scores of the high and low groups in Christians did not differ significantly.

The mean and S.D. of high and low religiosity groups were calculated in respect of self-esteem. 't' test was employed to find out the significance of difference between the two means. The data are shown below :-

Groups		Mean	S.D.	df	't' ratio	Level of significance.
Muslim	High	17.655	3.844	52	1.141	N.S.
	Low	18.884	4.245			
Christian	High	17.227	3.260	45	1.856	.05
	Low	18.846	2.824			
Hindu	High	18.863	3.415	46	2.756	.01
	Low	16.222	3.381			

Table No.4

Table No.4 showing 't' statistics for the comparison

of the three high and low groups in self-esteem. The analysis of the above table shows that the mean scores of high and low Christians were found to differ significantly at .05 level of confidence. Similarly, the mean scores of high and low religiosity Hindu groups were found to differ very significantly at .01 level of confidence. On the other hand the mean scores of the high and low groups in Muslims did not differ significantly.

Discussion :

The results of the present investigation indicate that the Muslims tended to have higher degree of religiosity as compared to Christions and Hindus, while Christians stood second. It seems that the high degree of religiosity among Muslims may be related to (1) their minority status and feeling of insecurity (2) the nature and the function of their religion and the dogmatism or rigidity with which they follow their religious practices in routine life. However, more researches are necessary to confirm this conclusion.

As regards the degree of religiosity and it's effect on dependency and self esteem, the results show that the highly religious groups inmuslims and Hindus exhibit significantly more dependency than their lower counterparts. High and low groups in Christian did not reflect any significant differance. Similarly, self-esteems was seen poorer in highly religious Hindus, while higher in the Christians of high religiosity. Among Muslims high and low religiosity groups did not reflect any significant difference.

To conclude the findings indicate that in Muslims and Hindus high religiosity groups have more dependency than their lower counterparts, while highly religious people among Muslims and Hindus become more dependent. This may be because of the monotheistic nature of Islam in Muslims and adherence to the principle of 'Karma' in Hindus. Further the results show that the highly religious Hindus have lower self-esteem while on the other hand, self-esteem is found to be higher among highly religious Christians. The self-esteem among Christians appeared to be higher due to the teaching and the nature of their religion and principle of confession. But it was found poorer among Hindus of higher religiosity because of the flexability and varietes of ritulistic practices of Hinduism. However, more research with other variables will be welcome to confirm this conclusion.

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